

manent and very considerable influence on the course of particular events. Nguruhi is lord also of all the spirits of the dead (*inasoka*) but his relation to them has not been further thought out. With this Supreme Being the people hold no intercourse by means of prayer, sacrifice, or in any other way. He stands remote from the religious life of the Wahehe and really serves only as an explanation of all those things and events which are otherwise inexplicable. All religious intercourse, all worship centres alone on the spirits of the dead. Hence if we speak of a religion of the Wahehe, it must be described as a pure worship of ancestors.¹ The human soul quits the body at death and at once becomes an ancestral spirit (*m'soka*) invisible and endowed with complete liberty of motion. Even the youngest children have souls which rank among the ancestral spirits at death. Hence the great multitude of the dead comprises spirits of all ages, from the infant one day old to the grey-haired patriarch. They are good or bad according as they were good or bad in life, and their social position also is unchanged. He who was powerful in life is powerful also in death ; he who was a nobody among men is a nobody also among the spirits. Hence the ghost of a great man can do more for the living than the ghost of a common man ; and the ghost of a man can do more than the ghost of a woman. Yet even the meanest ghost has power over the greatest living man, who can only defend himself by appealing for help to stronger ancestral spirits. Thus while the Supreme Being exercises a general

superintendence
over affairs, the real administration is in the
hands of the
ancestral spirits. While he, for example,
regulates the
weather as a whole, it is the ghosts who cause
each particular shower to fall or the sun to break out in
glory from
the clouds. If he sends plagues on the whole
people or
stays the ravages of disease, it is the ghosts who
make each
individual sick or sound. These powerful
spirits exert
themselves especially to help their
descendants, though they

¹ E. Nigmann, *Die Wahehe* (Berlin, the tribe,
individual tribesmen, the
1908), pp. 22 *si*. The writer does country, and so forth
(*op. dl.* p. 124)
not describe the Wahehe as a Bantu we may infer that the
people belong to
tribe, but from the characteristic pre- the Bantu stock,
fixes which they employ to designate